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Protesters march on ND Capitol Grounds and block traffic in front of Federal Building

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota State Capitol building was placed on "soft lockdown" this morning after pipeline protesters converged on the Capitol from all directions. Approximately 500 protesters carrying signs, placards and chanting converged on the Capitol with several attempting to enter the Capitol building.

The "soft lockdown" was initiated at 11:30 a.m. with all exterior doors to the building being locked and monitored by Highway Patrol officers. As the lockdown was initiated, an internal message was sent to all State Capitol employees notifying them of a "soft lockdown" and that key cards would need to be used to gain access to the building.

DAPL protesters began protesting at multiple locations around the Capitol to include the north and west entrance, as well as the south mall area.

Shortly after 1:00 p.m. the protesters began marching down 3rd Street with many walking on residential lawns. Locked arm-in-arm, they chanted "Water is life" and "Keep the oil in the soil" until they arrived at the intersection of 3rd and Rosser Avenue near the William Guy Federal Building. Law enforcement blocked off the roadway from traffic and lined up along the grass area next to the Federal Building. Protesters were notified that their actions of blocking the roadway were unlawful and they needed to return to their vehicles. The protesters slowly made their way back to the Capitol after approximately two hours.

No arrests were made regarding the protests efforts today.

"Based off of prior DAPL protest efforts, it is their intent to gather unlawfully and interrupt government functions," said Lt. Tom Iverson of the North Dakota Highway Patrol. "We have seen this theme played out in many of their unlawful protests."

In addition, approximately 50 protesters stopped at the Dakota Access Pipeline

construction site four miles south of St. Anthony this morning at 10:30. They proceeded onto the DAPL easement locked arm in arm, but were confronted by DAPL security personnel who gave them orders to vacate the private property. By 11:00 the protesters retreated to their vehicles and headed north towards Mandan. No arrests were made at this site.

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